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## THE ANTHOLOGION ATHOS LAVRA E-108: A GREEK-SLAVONIC LITURGICAL MANUSCRIPT

**Abstract:** The codex Athos Lavra E-108 is a musical liturgical manuscript from the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The change of the liturgical rite in the course of the 13<sup>th</sup> century was an important impulse for the development of the kalophonic style of Byzantine music. All genres of chant underwent a great change. Lavra E-108 contains both chants with Greek text and with Slavonic text. Various scribes contributed to this manuscript. It seems that the codex was used in a Greek-Slavonic congregation, in a Greek sphere of influence.

**Keywords :** manuscript Athos Lavra E-108, anthologion, Greek, Slavonic, great signs, kalophonia.

The manuscript Athos Lavra E-108 is a musical liturgical book, a so-called Anthologion, from the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>1</sup> It is composed of at least three different copies, including chants with both Greek and Slavonic. Various scribes, not only of Greek but also of Slavic origin, contributed to this codex.

For Byzantine music, the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries represent an important innovation. The sack of Constantinople by crusaders in 1204 brought the end of the cathedral rite. Under the influence of monasticism, the liturgical rite changed fundamentally during the course of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Subsequently liturgical music also underwent a great change. The old syllabic melodies were extended and embellished, and new, highly melismatic chants were composed. The new musical style, the so-called *kalophonia* or *beautiful chanting* evolved. The personal style of the *maïstores*, the composers, increased in importance.

The starting point for the new style were the liturgical books of the cathedral rite, the Asmatikon for small choir and the Psaltikon for the

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<sup>1</sup> The codex is edited by A. Jakovljević, *Антологија са неумама из доба кнеза и деспота Стефана Лазаревића*, Крушевац 2004. The investigation by Jakovljević showed that all the watermarks of the codex are from the last decade of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. All Greek composers of the codex were active in the 14<sup>th</sup> century; only Ioannes Kladas and Ioannes Laskares were still living at the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. There is no information about Stefan the Serb and Nikola the Serb. Cf. V. Peno, „Андрија Јаковљевић: Антологија са неумама из доба кнеза Лазара и деспота Стефана Лазаревића“, *Археографски прилози* 26–27 (2004–2005), 585–593.

soloist.<sup>2</sup> It seems that the melodies of the Psaltikon had the greatest influence, above all.

The Anthologion Lavra E–108 contains at the end of the manuscript the *Mega Ison* by Ioannes Koukouzeles,<sup>3</sup> a chant in which the great signs or *megala semadia* of the Byzantine notation are written out with interval signs.<sup>4</sup> In our codex the *Mega Ison* starts with *anabasma*, *katabasma*, the folio with the beginning of the *Mega Ison* being missing. Normally the *Mega Ison* is placed in the first part of the manuscripts as educational and introductory material. Both traditional and innovative elements are included in this poem, which show continuity and also the transition to the new style.

The *megala semadia* are important for the musical interpretation of a melody. They show the rhythm, the ornamentation, the timbre and the phrase.<sup>5</sup> Many great signs are found in the repertoire of the kontakia of the Psaltikon. These chants are rich in stereotypical melodic formulas and embellishments, which can either be extended or abridged.<sup>6</sup> In the majority of cases the melodic structure of kontakia is closely connected to the text. Here, the *megala semadia* are mostly written under embellishments, bearing the main accent of a word or even of a colon. This feature was more or less lost in the new style. In the new kalophonic style there are a lot more possibilities of interpretation of the *megala semadia*.<sup>7</sup>

The codex has a wide repertoire. There are stichera in the Slavonic and Greek languages, psalmic verses in kalophonic style, kratemata, anagrammatismoi and theotokia, copied by Greek and Slavonic scribes. Only a very restricted liturgical order can be seen in this Anthologion because of the various parts which were put together to form one manuscript.

<sup>2</sup> When the new kalophonic style appeared in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the earliest copy of the Byzantine Asmatikon dates from this time too, the oldest copy of the Byzantine Psaltikon dates from the last quarter of the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>3</sup> V. Athos Lavra E–108, f. 97r–98r.

<sup>4</sup> M. Alexandru, “Koukouzeles’ *Mega Ison*: Ansätze einer kritischen Edition”, *Cahiers de l’Institut du Moyen-âge Grec et Latin* 66 (1996), 3–23; Ch. Troelsgård, “Development of a Didactic Poem: Some remarks on the Ἰσον, ὀλίγον, ὀξεῖα by Ioannes Glykys”, in: *Byzantine Chant, Tradition and Reform: Acts of a Meeting held at the Danish Institute at Athens 1993*, Athens 1997, 69–85.

<sup>5</sup> A fundamental and extensive work on the *megala semadia* is the dissertation of M. Alexandru, *Studie über die “Großen Zeichen” der byzantinischen musikalischen Notation, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Periode vom Ende des 1. bis Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts*, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Copenhagen 2000.

<sup>6</sup> “In fact, in composing Kontakia the hymnwriters made use of the ‘formula’ – technique exactly in the same way as the composers of Heirmoi and Stichera”. V. E. Wellesz, *The Akathistos Hymn*, MMB Transcripta 9, Copenhagen 1957, LVI.

<sup>7</sup> G. Wolfram, „Die melodische Tradition des Psaltikon im Vergleich mit dem kalophonischen Repertoire“, in: *Tradition and Innovation in Late- and Postbyzantine Liturgical Chant*, Eastern Christian Studies 8, Leuven, Paris, Dudley (MA) 2008, 79–104.

My intention is to show a selection of the different kinds of liturgical chant in the manuscript Lavra E-108, and to show how the new style influenced all genres of Byzantine music.

The manuscript starts with three Slavonic stichera for 8<sup>th</sup> September, the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary.<sup>8</sup> They are written down in Middle Byzantine notation and seem to originate from the old sticheraric genre.

The syllabic stichera of the old tradition were mainly ornamented with small melismata in the cadences. The three stichera in Lavra E-108 are slightly embellished with many repetitions of the *ison*. In all three stichera we find some vocalisations, texted with vowel repetitions, and one specific melismatic formula of the kalophonic genre. The only great sign used in these hymns is a *psephiston*, showing the descending motion of the melos.

### Example 1.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

1-2-15 9-10-11-12  
ра а а а дхн се

The troparion of Stefan the Serb in the Slavonic language<sup>9</sup> shows us possibilities of composition in the new style. He is familiar with the kalophonic genre. Repetitions of parts of the text, long vocalisations with recurrent sequences of identical melodic groups are significant features of the melismatic extension of his troparion. He gives us many examples for the constant use of the *megala semadia*.

The various melismatic formulas, structured by a *bareia*, can be seen not only in the troparion of Stefan the Serb, but also in all kalophonic melodies. In kalophonia the *bareia* becomes a new stylistic instrument to structure and accentuate melodic micro-elements.

In many chants in our manuscript, especially in the Slavonic hymns, we find the intercalation of “X” within various embellishments.<sup>10</sup> This is a distinctive mark of the old asmatic repertory,<sup>11</sup> which is handed down only in the old-Slavonic Kondakarian notation. We find this special idiom in the Slavonic asmatic kontakia, in the hypakoai, but also in stichera and troparia.

<sup>8</sup> The two stichera are transcribed by Jakovljević, *op. cit.*, 99, 100.

<sup>9</sup> V. f. 10v.

<sup>10</sup> V. ff. 27r-v, 44v and our example 2: божѣ.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. A. Dostal – H. Rothe, unter Mitarbeit von E. Trapp, *Der altrussische Kondakar'. Blagověščenskij Kondakar'*, Facsimileausgabe, vol. 8, 2, *Bausteine zur Geschichte der Literatur bei den Slawen*, Giessen 1976.

**Example 2.**

Handwritten musical notation for Example 2, featuring Slavonic sticheron notation. The notation includes various signs (e.g., 4', 5, 7, 5, 7, 1) and syllables (e.g., ha ha ha ba ba ba ba ba). The notation is written in a clear, stylized hand.

The Slavonic sticheron of Nikola the Serb is copied in a very clear hand.<sup>12</sup> It is composed in a moderate kalophonic style, extended by long vocalisations and repetitions of identical melodic figures, supported either by a great sign or realized by a *bareia* group. In the sticheron of Nikola we find many parallels to the embellishments of Stefan the Serb.

A special feature of the kalophonic stichera are the so-called tereismata, where meaningless syllables are sung to melodic extensions. They are either inserted into the text of the chant or set at the end of the hymn.

**Example 3.**

Handwritten musical notation for Example 3, featuring Slavonic sticheron notation. The notation includes various signs (e.g., 1, 5, 7, 5, 7, 1) and syllables (e.g., ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha). The notation is written in a clear, stylized hand.

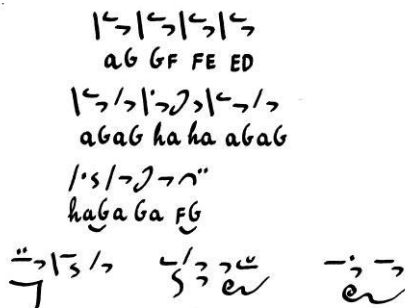
Another melismatic sticheron in the Slavonic language is the chant for Saint Sava.<sup>13</sup> Various great signs are written out in the same manner as in the sticheron of Nikola the Serb, different *bareia* groups show the new

<sup>12</sup> V. ff. 12r–v, transcribed by Jakovljević, *op. cit.*, 102–105.

<sup>13</sup> V. ff. 14r–v, transcribed by Jakovljević, *op. cit.*, 106–108.

melodic embellishment. The stepwise ascent between “G” and “d” by means of the *oligon* sign on folio 14v can be clearly seen in the notation.

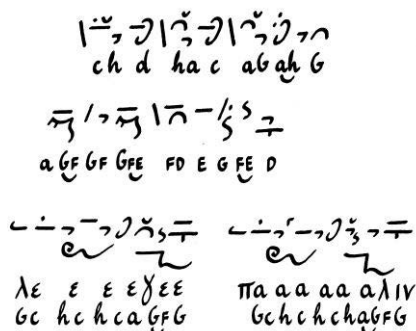
### Example 4.



The text of the Christmas sticheron in the Slavonic language<sup>14</sup> seems to be close to the sticheron idiomelon Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις Θεῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη. We can suppose that this sticheron belonged to the old sticheraric genre and was embellished in the course of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The embellishments within the text are rather short, but we see the ornamentations in the inserted teretismata.

Lavra E–108 contains a another composition by Stefan the Serb.<sup>15</sup> It is a psalm verse with an extended Alleluia. The stichos begins with a very simple melos of the old psalmodic tradition and continues in a highly melismatic manner, but quite different from the style of the stichera. For reasons of repetition of parts of the melos the words *λέγε* respectively *πάλιν* are inserted into the text. It can also be seen as a kind of medial intonation.

### Example 5.



<sup>14</sup> V. ff. 26v–27r.

<sup>15</sup> V. f. 16r.



An important part of the repertoire of Lavra E-108 comprises the verses of the Psalms for various services. Psalms 2 and 3<sup>18</sup> are performed on Sunday service; verses of Psalm 103<sup>19</sup> are chanted at Esperinos. The greatest part of psalmic verses in our manuscript are the so-called Polyeleoi with stichoi of the Psalms 134 and 135<sup>20</sup> for special feasts.

The first line of different psalmic verses begins with a simple syllabic melos which seems to belong to the old psalmodic tradition. But the following lines continue with melismatic embellishments.

In Lavra E-108, the chant of the Polyeleos is divided into two parts (στάσεις): the psalmic verses of the first stasis belong to Psalm 134. From f. 22r to f. 25r the psalmic stichoi are chanted only with an Alleluia refrain, a so-called *ephymnion*. *Melodes* Ioannes Koukouzeles, Xenos Korones and Chaliboures are mentioned as composers of these verses. All other pieces are handed down anonymously. On f. 28r between the psalmic verse and the Alleluia refrain is an imposed non-psalmic text: Ἀσατε συννετῶς τῷ Θεῷ ἡμῶν. Ἀλληλούια. The non-psalmic text: Αἰνεῖτε, ὑμνεῖτε, δοξολογεῖτε τὸν ὄντως Θεὸν ἡμῶν. Ἀλληλούια appears only once on f. 28v. On f. 28v-29r we find the poetic text: Ὑμνοῦμεν σε, εὐλογοῦμεν σε, βασιλεῦ ἅγιε, δόξα σοι, σὺν νύχτι καὶ πνεύματι. Ἀλληλούια. Two psalmic verses form a unity with the same melos, the same Alleluia refrain and the same poetic text. On f. 29r-v the psalmic verse Οἶκος Λευῖ, εὐλογήσατε τὸν Κύριον is followed by a hymn: Ἐμμανουὴλ παιδίον, κατὰ τὸ γεγραμμένον, μεθ' ἡμῶν γενοῦ, ὁ Θεὸς τῶν ἀπάντων, καὶ Κύριος τῆς δόξης, βουλῆς μεγάλης ἄγγελος, ὁ πρῶν ἀόρατος, καὶ πᾶσιν ἀθεώρητος, καὶ μένων εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. Ἀλληλούια.<sup>21</sup> The verses of the second stasis<sup>22</sup> are written in the second mode, in the second plagal mode, in the fourth mode, in nenano and in nana. The verses of Psalm 135 begin with the chant of a stichos, an Alleluia, a poetic text and again an Alleluia. The poetic refrain for all stichoi of the second stasis is: Ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ. A quite different tradition of the Polyeleos shows an extensive composition by Xenos

<sup>18</sup> V. ff. 6r-9v, 18r-v.

<sup>19</sup> V. ff. 20r-22r.

<sup>20</sup> V. ff. 22r-38r, 40v-42v. The term Polyeleos originates from the refrain of Psalm 135: ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ.

<sup>21</sup> A. Γ. Χαλδαϊάκη, Ὁ πολυέλεος στὴν βυζαντινὴ καὶ μεταβυζαντινὴ μελοποιία, Ἰδρυμα Βυζαντινῆς Μουσικολογίας, Μελέται 5, Athens 2003, 569; E. V. Williams, "The Kalophonic Tradition and Chants for the Polyeleos Psalm 134", *Studies in Eastern Chant* 4, 1979, 229-241.

<sup>22</sup> V. ff. 30r-38r.





προφῆται,<sup>24</sup> a theotokion with many epithets of the Virgin Mary. At the beginning we find modal signatures for the first echos and for the fourth plagal echos, so the *psaltai* can decide either to chant in the first or in the fourth plagal mode. The two modes coincide in “D”. The first mode has the semitone between the second and the third step, the fourth plagal mode has a semitone between the third and the fourth step.

There are very clear comments on the performance of the chant Ἀνωθεν οἱ προφῆται by Andronikos: The *psaltai* of the right side begin chanting the first part of the theotokion, the whole choir repeats this, then the right choir performs it again at a higher pitch: Ὁ δεξιὸς χορός – ψάλλεται καὶ ἀπὸ χοροῦ – πάλιν ὁ δεξιὸς χορός ὑψηλοτέρᾳ φωνῇ. Ὁμοῦ πάντες – the whole choir chants the next part of the hymn twice – πάλιν τὸ αὐτό. Then the right choir again begins to chant part of the theotokion and the left choir repeats it – πάλιν τὸ αὐτὸ ὁ ἑτερος χορός.

At the beginning of one of the several parts of the chant there is the modal signature of the second plagal mode with the comment ἔξω διπλασμός, which means, that part of the chant begins an octave higher. In the various sections of the theotokion, belonging to different modes, we find many inserted teretismata and frequent repetitions of the words Ἀνωθεν οἱ προφῆται.

A special feature of the Late Byzantine period are the kratemata,<sup>25</sup> a kind of vocal music without any text. The melos is supported only by meaningless syllables. Long liturgical services were accompanied by kratemata.<sup>26</sup> They were chanted mainly between the verses of the Psalms 103 and 1 to 3 at Esperinos, and 134 and 135 (the Polyeleoi) at Orthros. Most of the kratemata are introduced by a prologos, which can be either a psalmic verse or a doxology. In all the melodies of the kratemata there is a great common store of stereotypical melodic formulae.

Several kratemata in Lavra E-108 are ascribed to Ioannes Koukouzeles, Ioannes Kladas and Xenos Korones. The kratema by Ioannes Koukouzeles<sup>27</sup> shows very clearly how the melos can be structured either by medial intonations or by shifting the melos into the higher or lower fifth or fourth or to the basic tone of the mode. The recurrent stereotypical sequences and embellishments seem to give a lot of room for improvisation to the *psaltai*.

<sup>24</sup> V. ff. 45r–46v.

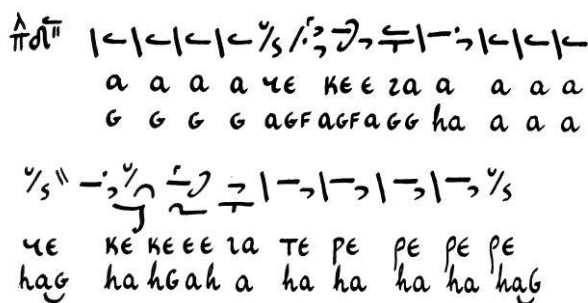
<sup>25</sup> G. Wolfram, “Die spätbyzantinische Gesangsform der Kratemata”, in: *Cantus Planus*, Budapest 2006, 115–122.

<sup>26</sup> A. Lingas, “Hesychasm and Psalmody”, in: *Mount Athos and Byzantine Monasticism*, London – Brookfield (Vt. USA) 1996, 155–168.

<sup>27</sup> V. ff. 39r–40v.

The second and the third line of a kratema by Ioannes Kladas, on f. 17v, provide a small example of the treatment of the meaningless syllables. We can assume that the syllables *a-na-ne* require a different kind of interpretation from the syllables *te-re-re-re-re* or *to-to-to*.

### Example 8.



The Anthologion Lavra E–108 contains three different compositions of the prooimion of the Akathistos hymn *Τῇ ὑπερμάχῳ στρατηγῷ*. In all three versions only the prooimion is preserved.

The shortest version, copied by a Slavic scribe, seems to be the oldest<sup>28</sup> of the three compositions. There are short melodic extensions of the mainly syllabic chant, to be performed not by a soloist but by a choir. It is a completely different style in comparison with the prooimion in the *Psaltikon Contacarium Ashburnhamense*,<sup>29</sup> a chant-book for a soloist.

The second prooimion in our manuscript is a composition by Ioannes Kladas.<sup>30</sup> It is composed in the kalophonic style with the insertion of long embellishments, descending and ascending sequences, repetition of words or phrases. In between there are long teretismata. The prooimion ends with the words *Ἰνα κράζω σοι*. This means that the last words *Χαῖρε νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε* were sung by the choir. Ioannes Kladas was the first to compose a complete Akathistos hymn with prooimion and 24 oikoi.<sup>31</sup>

The third version of the prooimion is by Ioannes Koukouzeles.<sup>32</sup> He repeats the text of different kola and provides them with new melodic

<sup>28</sup> V. f. 64v, transcribed by Jakovljević, *op. cit.*, 124.

<sup>29</sup> C. Høeg, *Contacarium Ashburnhamense* (reproduction intégrale du Codex Laurentianus Ashb. 64), MMB 4, Copenhagen 1956, 108r–v; E. Wellesz, *The Akathistos Hymn*, *op. cit.*, 3f.

<sup>30</sup> V. ff. 72r–73r.

<sup>31</sup> V. Φ. Κρητικοῦ, *Ὁ Ἀκάθιστος Ὑμνος στὴ Βυζαντινὴ καὶ Μεταβυζαντινὴ Μελopoία*, *Ἰδρυμα Βυζαντινῆς Μουσικολογίας*, Μελέται 10, Athens 2004, 156–175.

<sup>32</sup> V. ff. 81r–v.

embellishments. In between he inserts a teretisma. He also closes the prooimion with the words *Ἦνα κράζω σοι*. The composition by Koukouzeles is not as extended as the prooimion by Kladas. Ioannes Koukouzeles composed an Akathistos hymn with 13 oikoi and made extensive anagrammatismoi of the first and the last oikos.<sup>33</sup>

As our notational examples have shown, the kalophonic style began to influence all kinds of liturgical chant in the course of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The old stichera were not only extended by new embellishments but were also changed into a new form of composition – the anagrammatismoi. The teretismata created a new shape within the chants. The kratemata became contemplative compositions within a liturgical service. But within all these renewals, traditional elements were also preserved in new liturgical chant books, as can be seen, on the example of psalmic verses and in the great signs of the *Mega Ison*.

The codex Lavra E-108 reveals different levels of the scribes' mastery: we find Greek copies of chants of high quality, written either by Greek or Slavic hands, we find copies of medium grade quality, written by Slavic hands, and we can see copies of poor quality, also written by Slavic scribes. A great part of the manuscript must have been copied in an excellent scriptorium, where both Greek and Slavic scribes were educated.

In the course of the investigation of Lavra E-108 it became apparent that the manuscript must have been in the possession of a Slavic – Greek community in a prevailing Greek environment. We find many notational variants within the chants, additions on margins, written in many cases by Slavic scribes. There must have been great interest in this community to include the compositions by Stefan the Serb and Nikola the Serb in the Anthologion. The sticheron in honour of Saint Sava is also an indication of Serbian participation in the community.

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<sup>33</sup> V. Φ. Κρητικού, *op. cit.*, 138–150.

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АНТОЛОГИЈА АТОС ЛАВРА Е-108  
ГРЧКО-СЛОВЕНСКИ ЛИТУРГИЈСКИ РУКОПИС  
(Резиме)

Рукопис Атос Лавра Е-108 је музичка антологија из последњих година XIV века. Садржи напеве са грчким и словенским текстовима. XIII и XIV столеће представљало је доба значајних иновација на пољу византијске музике. Под утицајем манастирског живота, богослужбено појање је доживело велике промене. Нови музички стил, тзв. калофонија, утицао је на све врсте византијских напева. Старе силабичне мелодије су прошириване и улепшаване, што је резултирало веома мелизматичним напевима. Лични стил мајстора је, такође добио на значају.

Кодекс Лавра Е-108 садржи *Велики исон* Јована Кукузеља, песму чији су велики знаци записани интервалским ознакама. Ови велики знаци су значајни за музичку интерпретацију мелодије.

Рукопис садржи стихире на словенском и грчком језику, псаламске стихове калофоног стила, кратиме, анаграматизме и богородичне, у грчким и словенским преписима.

У раду је приказан избор разноврсних литургијских напева датог рукописа, а на основу различитих музичких примера илустрован је начин на који је нови стил утицао на све жанрове византијске музике. На почетку рукописа су напеви старог стихирарског напева на словенском језику. Они су у мањој мери прилагођени новом стилу. Композиције српских мелода – Стефана Србина и Николе Србина – налазе се у рукопису и блиске су калофоном стилу. Стихире које припадају старом византијском репертоару су промењене у анаграматизме. Делови текста или појединачне речи су понављане и украшене, у текстове су уметности и теретизми, слогови без значења.

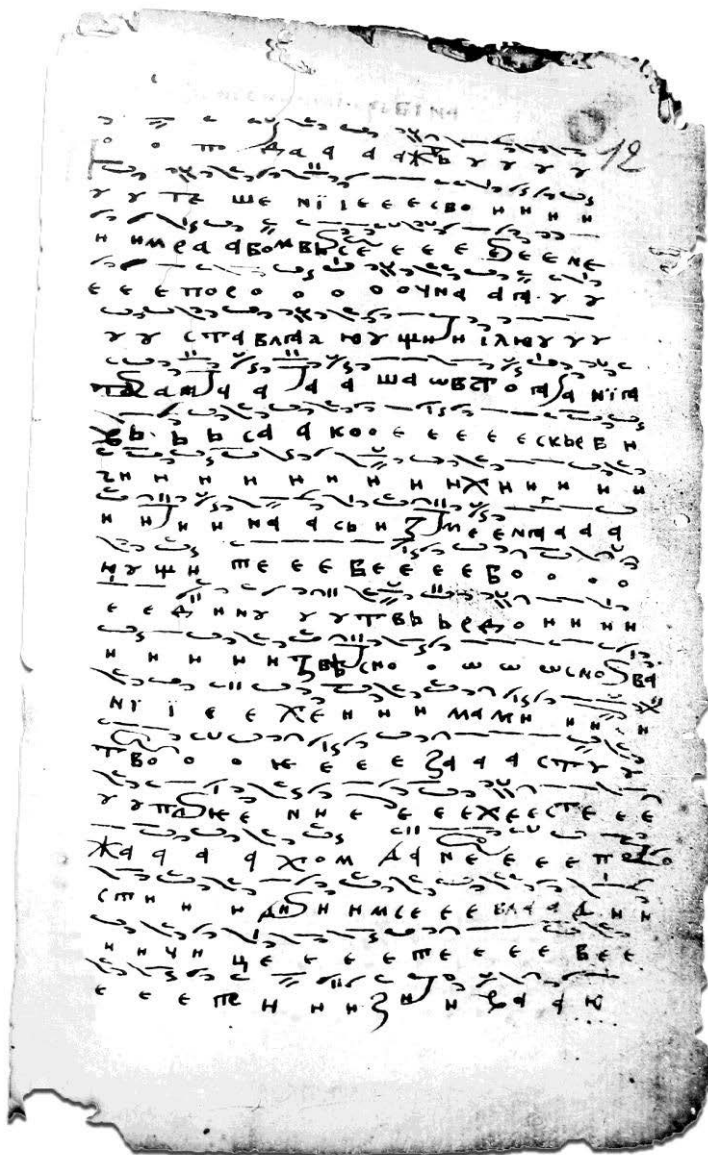
Значајан део садржаја рукописа Лавра Е-108 чине стихови полијелеја, 134. и 135. псалма. Између псаламских стихова и Алилуија мелодија, уметнути су поетски стихови. За позни византијски музички период карактеристичне су и кратиме, тип вокалне музике без текста. У питању је контемплативан напев упражњаван током дугачких литургијских обреда.

Рад на рукопису Атос Лавра Е-108 потврдио је да је рукопис био у поседу словенско-грчке заједнице, у сфери грчког утицаја.

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Anthologion Lavra E-108, твореніє николі сръбина, подажд љтешеніє своим  
равом, f. 12r (facsimile in: A. Јаковљевић, *Антологија са неумама из  
доба кнеза и деспота Стефана Лазаревића*, Крушевац 2004).